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A FOLK SONG CHAPBOOK

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A FOLK SONG CHAPBOOK

COLLECTED BY

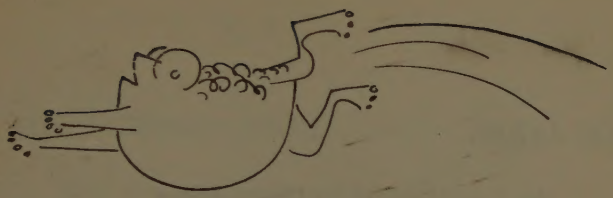
MARION KINGSTON

Editor's note:

Each folk song and rhyme in this chapbook has been collected from oral tradition, and although I have undoubtedly overlooked some printed sources, I have made every effort to include here only previously unpublished versions. A garbled half-stanza has been omitted from "True Blue Bill"; otherwise nothing has been reworded or abridged. Hence the collection may be of interest both to the general reader and to the scholar. I have tried to select songs that would be good to read even when, regrettably, separated from their tunes. Whenever possible I have included the singer's own comment on the song.

I should like to thank heartily all the friends who have provided the songs and rhymes from which this issue has been assembled. I am especially grateful to Miss Marjorie Kimmerle of the Department of English at the University of Colorado for her generosity in making available to me her wonderfully rich collection. Material drawn from the Kimmerle collection is indicated in the notes by a K.

Marion Kingston



1

TARPEN AND TOAD

As I was going down the road
I met the tarpen and the toad.
Every time the toad would jump
The tarpen would dart behind the stump.

Chorus: So close the kitchen
Old folks, young folks,
Oho! Virginia true.

As I went out on yonder hill
There I spide my Uncle Bill
Sitting on a tater hill
Eating up a Whiper Will.

LITTLE HOBBY HORSE

Little hobby horse as white as milk,
Saddled with the gold and bridled with the silk.
Pigs in the parlor making up the beds,
Cats before the fire combing their heads,
Misses in the dairy making cheese,
Cows in the meadow making hay,
Horses in the barn thrashing out corn,
Did you ever see such a little one since I was born?

2

UNCLE JAKES

As I went down to Uncle Jakes
To see old Auntie baking cakes
A little bit of dough
And that was flour
A little bit of milk
And that was sour.

Collected by Helen Crabb from her aunt, Miss Margaret Francisco, an old lady who learned this and the two preceding songs in Staunton, Virginia. K.

FUDGE, FUDGE

Fudge, fudge,
Call the judge,
Mama's got a new-born baby.
It's not a girl,
It's not a boy,
It's just a new-born baby.
What'll we do?
What'll we do?
Wrap it up in tissue paper,
Send it down the elevator,
First floor miss [jumper misses on purpose],
Second floor miss [again],
Third floor and out the door [jumper runs out].

Jump-rope game collected by Alice Ingwerson in grade school, Illinois. K.

THE PUMPKIN SONG

Said the pumpkin to himself
As he lay in the cellar,
"Oh, I wish I had stayed away,
For there's nothing going on
That would interest a feller
If he lived here a year and a day.
Oh the apples and the turnips
Are as still as they can be,
The potaters might as well be dead,
For although they have their eyes
I am sure they cannot see
Or hear a single word that's said."
Just then there came a sound
As of soft wind sighing
And an odor soon completely filled the air
As the onion changed position
In his corner lying
Beside the dark cellar stair.
By and by there came a Giant
Who took the pumpkin off
And left the others there alone.
The pumpkin wondered then
As his heart within him quaked
What would happen, but to us 'tis no surprise.
For they cut him into pieces
And they stewed and they baked
Till they had a row of pumpkin pies.

Collected by James R. Bails in Evergreen, Colorado. "My mother learned this song from her grandmother in the early 1900's. My great-grandmother remembered it as an old family lullaby, so it would be possible to state that the song is at least 100 years old. My great-great-grandmother came from North Carolina and she and her husband homesteaded in Eastern Illinois." K.

4

WILLIAM A-TREMBLETOE

William A-Trembletoe
He's a good fisherman,
Catch his hens,
Put them in pens,
Some lay eggs,
Some none.
Wire briar
Nimber lock
Three old geese
In a flock,
One flew east,
One flew west,
One flew over the cuckoo's nest.
O-U-T spells out,
You old dirty dish rag **you.**

Counting-out rhyme collected from Edith Buchanan, North Carolina.

THE PURPLE HEN

La gallina purpurado
Puso un huevo en el arado.
Puso uno, puso duo, puso tres.
Tapa, cocho.

Translated:

The purple hen
Laid an egg on the hoe.
She laid one, she laid two, she laid three.
Hide, hog.

Counting-out rhyme collected by Dolores Brown from Angela Salazar, aged five, from southern Texas. It is played like "One potato, two potato."

HEIGH-HO SILVER

Heigh-ho Silver everywhere
Tonto's lost his underwear.
Tonto says, "Me no care,
Lone Ranger buy me brand new pair."

Collected by Alice Ingwersen in grade school, Illinois. K.

6

GRASSHOPPER SONG

There once was a grasshopper lived in a pine tree,
Silver-voiced as a frog in June.
He was not pleased with his situation;
Thought he would like to go to the moon.

Oh-heigh-oh, "Why did I come here?-oh!
With a hop and a skip and a flop and a flip,
"Way up to the moon I will go!"

Up he went like a streak of lightning.
Down he came like a thunderbolt.
There he spied a man with a lantern
Riding on a pea-green colt.

Oh-heigh-oh, "Why did I come here? -oh!
With a hop and a skip and a flop and a flip,
Way back to the earth I will go!"

Up he went like a fiery rocket.
Down he came like a shooting star.
And whom should he meet but a gay little goshawk,
Flying over the earth so far.

Oh-heigh-oh, poor little grasshopper-oh!
With a snap and a tweak of the bonny bird's beak,
And that was the end of him, oh!

Collected by Nancy Nelson from Kent L. Sanborn, Longmont, Colorado. "Mr. Sanborn remembers that his grandmother sang it to him when he was very small. The Sanborns are New Englanders of English descent." K.

THE OLD WOMAN

There was an old woman all skin and bones,
Oo-oo-oo.
Her name was Smith, but they called her Jones,
Oo-oo-oo.
This woman went to church one day,
Oo-oo-oo.
To hear the parson preach and pray.
Oo-oo-oo.
When she got up and near the door,
Oo-oo-oo.
She found a dead man on the floor.
Oo-oo-oo.
The woman to the parson said,
Oo-oo-oo.
"Will I look like that when I am dead?"
Oo-oo-oo.
The parson to the woman said,
Oo-oo-oo.
"Yes, you'll look like that when you are dead."
Oo-oo-oo.
The woman to the parson said,
(Scream here).

Collected from Alice Krieg, Danbury, Conn., about 1940.

8

SNAKE BAKED A HOECAKE

Snake baked a hoecake,
And left a frog to mind it,
The frog went to sleep
And the lizard came and stoled it.
Bring back my hoecake
You long-tailed lizard you.

The rain came and wet me,
The sun came and dried me.
Stand back, pretty gal,
Don't you come a-nigh me.

OLD MOLLY HARE

Old Molly Hare,
What you doin' there?
Goin' through the cotton patch
Hard as you can tear.

The above two collected from Edith Buchanan, North Carolina.

LONELY WOODPECKER

There was a lonely woodpecker
A-sittin' on a hill,
Pecked against a granite rock
And broke his little bill.

Collected by Richard Fluke, El Centro, California. K.

DO, MAMA, DO

Mama, buy me a china doll.
Mama, buy me a china doll.
Mama, buy me a china doll.
Do, Mama, do.

What will I buy it with?
What will I buy it with?
What will I buy it with?
Do, Mama, do.

Sell papa's feather bed.
Sell papa's feather bed.
Sell papa's feather bed.
Do, Mama, do.

Where will papa sleep?
Where will papa sleep?
Where will papa sleep?
Do, Mama, do.

Sleep in the piggie's bed.
Sleep in the piggie's bed.
Sleep in the piggie's bed.
Do, Mama, do.

Yes, my child, I'll buy you a doll.
Yes, my child, I'll buy you a doll.
Yes, my child, I'll buy you a doll.
Do, Mama, do.

Collected from William E. Elam, Carson, Iowa, who learned it from his mother. 1936. K.

10

MOUSE WENT A-COURTIN'

There once was a mouse who lived on a hill
Ah ha, ah ha,
There once was a mouse who lived on a hill
And he hustled and bustled like Buffalo Bill,
Ah ha, ah ha.

One day he thought he'd go for a ride
Ah ha, ah ha,
One day he thought he'd go for a ride
With his sword and his pistol by his side,
Ah ha, ah ha.

He rode up to Miss Mousie's door
Ah ha, ah ha,
He rode up to Miss Mousie's door
And knocked and knocked till his fists got sore,
Ah ha, ah ha.

He set Miss Mousie on his knee
Ah ha, ah ha,
He set Miss Mousie on his knee
And he asked her, "Will you marry me?"
Ah ha, ah ha.

"Oh, no!" she said, "I can't do that,"
Ah ha, ah ha,
"Oh, no!" she said, "I can't do that
Until I ask my brother rat."
Ah ha, ah ha.

Her brother rat has gone to town
Ah ha, ah ha,
Her brother rat has gone to town
To buy Miss Mousie a wedding gown,
Ah ha, ah ha.

The wedding was held in the old oak tree
Ah ha, ah ha,
The wedding was held in the old oak tree
With corn and cabbage and black-eyed peas,
Ah ha, ah ha.

The first to come was Mr. Chick
Ah ha, ah ha,
The first to come was Mr. Chick
And he ate so much that he got sick,
Ah ha, ah ha.

The second to come was Dr. Fly
Ah ha, ah ha,
The second to come was Dr. Fly
And he said that Mr. Chick might die,
Ah ha, ah ha.

The last to come was Mr. Snake
Ah ha, ah ha,
The last to come was Mr. Snake
And he wrapped his tail around the cake,
Ah ha, ah ha.

And after that they sailed for France
Ah ha, ah ha,
And after that they sailed for France
And that was the end of their romance,
Ah ha, ah ha.

They had six kids that looked like rats
Ah ha, ah ha,
They had six kids that looked like rats
Tall, short, skinny, and fat,
Ah ha, ah ha.

And that is all, there ain't no more
Ah ha, ah ha,
And that is all, there ain't no more
If I told you more you might get sore,
Ah ha, ah ha.

THE PRUNE SONG

No matter how young a prune may be,
He's always full of wrinkles.
A baby prune's just like his Dad,
But he's not wrinkled quite so bad.
We have wrinkles on our face
Pruney has them everyplace.
Nooooooooo matter how young a prune may be,
He's always getting stewed!

These two songs collected from Janis Benson Cripe, Beloit, Wisconsin.

AS I BE DID

My love, him went and did me dirt;
I had not know him were a flirt.
And you, my friend, may God forbid
That you be done as I be did.

Collected from R. Morrison, Texas. K.

PAPER OF PINS

I'll give to you a paper of pins
To pin your petticoat round your shins
If you'll marry, marry, marry, marry,
If you'll marry me.

You'll give to me a paper of pins
To pin my petticoat round my shins;
I won't marry, marry, marry, marry,
I won't marry you.

I'll give to you a blue silk gown
To make you pretty when you go to town,
If you'll marry, marry, marry, marry,
If you'll marry me.

You'll give to me a blue silk gown
To make me pretty when I go to town;
I won't marry, marry, marry, marry,
I won't marry you.

14

I'll give to you a little black nigger
To make your bed and to cook your dinner
If you'll marry, marry, marry, marry,
If you'll marry me.

You'll give to me a little black nigger
To make my bed and to cook my dinner;
I won't marry, marry, marry, marry,
I won't marry you.

I'll give to you the keys to my heart
That we may love and never part
If you'll marry, marry, marry, marry,
If you'll marry me.

You'll give to me the keys to your heart
That we may love and never part;
I won't marry, marry, marry, marry,
I won't marry you.

I'll give to you the keys to my chest
And all the money that I possess
If you'll marry, marry, marry, marry,
If you'll marry me.

You'll give to me the keys to your chest
And all the money that you possess—
Then I'll marry, marry, marry, marry,
Then I'll marry you.

Ha ha ha, you think you're funny;
You don't want me, but you want my money.
I won't marry, marry, marry, marry,
I won't marry you.

Learned by Marion Kingston, Boston, 1930's.

I CAME TO A RIVER

Oh I came to a river and I couldn't get across,
So I paid ten dollars for an old grey horse,
And the horse wouldn't go so I traded for a hoe,
And the hoe wouldn't dig so I traded for a pig,
And the pig wouldn't squeal so I traded for a wheel,
And the wheel wouldn't run so I traded for a gun,
And the gun wouldn't shoot so I traded for a boot,
And the boot wouldn't wear so I traded for a bear,
And the bear wouldn't holler so I traded for a dollar,
And the dollar wouldn't pass so I threw it on the grass.

With my hands in my pockets and my pockets in my pants,
I was watching little fishies do the hoochie-coochie dance.

Collected by Pam Brown from her mother. K.

GUNK GUNK

"Gunk Gunk," said the little Mr. Bullfrog;
"Gunk Gunk," said the other froggie too.
"Gunk Gunk," said the both of them together
And their eyes they winked, WOO WOO!

And they kissed each other (smack smack)
Just as little froggies do,
And he said, "Goodbye," and she said, "Oh my,
Gunk Gunk, I'm going too."

Collected from Alison and Sarah-Lindsay Walsh, Beloit, Wisconsin.

16

THREE MEN THEY WENT A-HUNTING

Three men they went a-hunting
Something for to find.
They came upon a haystack,
And that they left behind.
Englishman said, "Haystack."
Scotchman, he said, "Nay."
"Arra gawan," says Pat, "it's a Methodist Church
With the steeple blown away!"

Chorus: What do you think of that, now?
Will you get onto that, now?
That is a positive fact, now.
Folla de rolla de ay.

Still they went a-hunting
Something for to find.
They came upon a scarecrow
And that they left behind.
Englishman said, "Scarecrow."
Scotchman, he said, "Nay."
"Arra gawan," says Pat, "it's an old maid
With her petticoats blown away!"

Still they went a-hunting
Something for to find.
They came upon an elephant,
And that they left behind.
Englishman said, "Elephant."
Scotchman, he said, "Nay."
"Arra gawan," says Pat, "it's a donkey
With his tail the other way!"

Still they went a-hunting
Something for to find.
They came upon a hedgehog,
And that they left behind.
Englishman said, "Hedgehog."
Scotchman, he said, "Nay."
"Arra gawan," says Pat, "it's a pincushion,
With the pins stuck in wrong way!"

Collected by Helen McKell. "My grandfather used to entertain his large flock of grandchildren with this." K.

18

THE INSULT

I've swum the Colorado where she runs close down to
hell;
I've braced the faro layout in Cheyenne;
I've fought for muddy water with a bunch of howlin'
swine
And swallowed hot tamales and cayenne;
I've rode a pitchin' bronco till the sky was
underneath;
I've tackled every desert in the land;
I've sampled XX whiskey till I couldn't hardly see
An' dallied with the quicksands of the Grande;
I've argued with the marshals of a half a dozen
burgs;
I've been dragged free and fancy by a cow;
I've had three years campaignin' with the fightin',
bitin' Ninth,
An' I never lost my temper till right now.
I've had yeller fever and been shot plum full of
holes;
I've grabbed an army mule down by the tail;
But I've never been so snortin', really highfalutin'
mad
As when you went and gives me ginger ale.

Collected by Helen Crabb, Midland, Texas. "My father has been an independent in the oil business since oil was first 'struck' in West Texas. During those years many of the more colorful characters of the early oil boom in West Texas were at one time or another partners of my father. I remember one of my father's partners singing this song for me every time he was at our house." K.

TRUE BLUE BILL

I grew up in the mountains, out where snakes have legs,
Where hoot-owls speak in English and roosters lay square eggs.
I shaved my beard and mustache the morning I was borned,
And then, that night, beat up my old man and I drank his rye and corn.

Chorus: Now, I'm a truthful fellow.
They call me True Blue Bill.
I never spoke a false word,
And I guess I never will.

One time when I was shipwrecked, on an island in the sea,
By cannibals I was captured and tied up to a tree.
They took me to the tum tum and they got rather rough,
But they said I would not make good steak because I was too tough.

I used to be a flyer, up in my air-o-plane,
I flew over to Paris and started home again.
When I got halfway over, the doggone motor balked.
I left the durn thing set up there and I got out and walked.

Collected by William E. Elam from Coleman Murrell, Competition, Missouri, 1943. "This song represents some of the brag of the hill-billies of the Missouri Ozarks. Many of the young men learn such songs and sing them with gusto, often adapting the song to their own situations and sometimes even changing the names to their own." K.

20

TYIN' KNOTS IN THE DEVIL'S TAIL

Way up yonder in the Sierra peaks,
Where the mountain pines grow tall,
Sandy Sam and Rusty Jiggs
Had a roundup camp last fall.

They had their ponies and branding irons
And maybe a dog or two.
They'd throw their brand on any ol' dogie
What roamed within their view.

So any ol' dogie with floppy ears
What couldn't hold up by day
Would get her old hide scorched and her ol' ears
cropped
In the most artistic way.

Said Sandy Sam to Rusty Jiggs,
And he threw his cigo down—
"B'golly I'm tired of punchin' cows,
So I reckon I'll go to town."

They jumped on their ponies and struck a lope—
It wasn't much of a ride.
Then was the days when the old cowpunchers
Could wet their dry insides.

They started in at Kentucky Bar,
'Way up at the head of the row,
And they ended up at the depot house,
Just forty-two drinks below.

21

Well, they got on their ponies and lit out for camp
A-carrying that awful load,
And whom should they meet but the devil hisself
A-walkin' up the road.

Says the devil to them: "You cowpunchin' skunks,
Now, you better hunt your holes,
For I've come up from hell's rimrock
To gather in your souls."

"The devil be damned," said Sandy Sam.
"Now, I know I'm awful tight,
But no devil ever killed an old cowpuncher
Without one hell of a fight!"

So he took his lasso and he built him a loop
And he threw it straight and true.
He caught the devil right around the horns,
And he got him anchored to.

Now Rusty Jiggs was a right old man,
Who cut line curls so neat.
He pitched 'er out and he built him a loop
And he roped the devil's hind feet.

They stretched him out and they tailed him down,
And they got their irons red-hot.
They cut a swallow-fork in each ear,
And they scorched him up a lot.

They took him up in the high Sierras
And they tied him to a big black oak.
They called him a dirty ol' son-of-a-gun—
Tied knots in his tail for a joke.

So if you're ever in the Sierra Nevadas
And hear a hell of a wail,
You'll know it's the damned ol' devil himself,
A-cussin' them knots in his tail.

Collected by James M. Neal from Johnny Rose, Villegreen, Colorado. K.

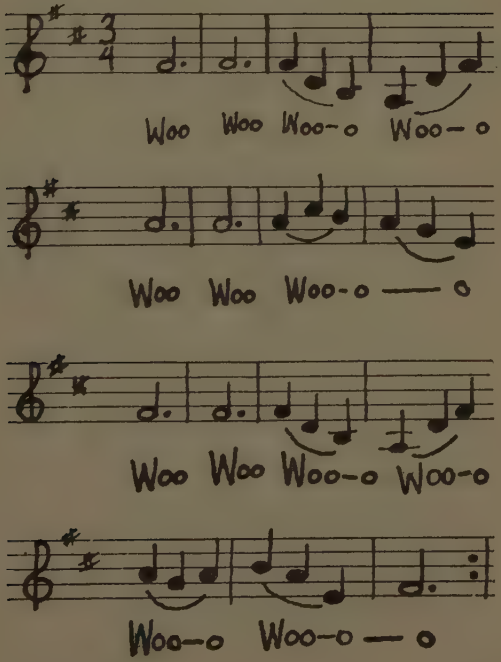
WHEN THE OLD BOSS DIES

When the old boss dies
We'll all have fun
We'll put him in the wagon
Set the mules on a run
Sing a tee yi yippy
Yippy yay, yippy yay
Sing a tee yi yippy yippy yay.

We'll wrap him in his blanket
And roll him in his hole.
May the worms get his body
And the Devil get his soul
Sing a tee yi yippy
Yippy yay, yippy yay
Sing a tee yi yippy yippy yay.

Collected by Elaine Mullenax, in Colorado. K.

COWBOY LULLABY



Collected by Mabel McKinney from her mother in Lovell, Okla. "This song was sung by my cowboy grandfather both to calm the cows at night on trips and to his baby daughter." K.

24

SALLY GOOD'UN

I killed my old dog and I made him into puddin'
Wrapped him all up and sent him down to Sally Good'un.
I asked her for a kiss and she said she surely wouldn't
That there's muh gal, Yes, that's my Sally Good'un.

I killed my old cat and I sent her the liver
She jest got mad and she threw it in the river.
But, that's my gal, she's as sweet as cherry puddin'
I can jest see her doin' it, sweet Sally Good'un.

Collected by William E. Elam, Carson, Iowa, 1936. "Out of all the tunes that Dad really appreciated, I believe that the one called 'Sally Good'un' was his favorite. When he wasn't singing the words to it, he was whistling it, and often, when he was in the house, playing it on his 'juice harp.' Anyway, while I cannot put down all the verses as he sang them, I shall try to give an idea of the words to this old fiddle tune." **K.**

FIVE OLD LADIES

Chorus: Oh dear, what a calamity,
Five old ladies locked in a lavatory,
They were there from Monday till Saturday,
Nobody knew they were there.

They hadn't been drinking any strong liquor;
They'd all been to tea with the wife of the Vicar;
They all went together, they thought it was quicker,
And nobody knew they were there.

The first one's name was Penelope Porter.
She was the deacon of Manchester's daughter;
She went there to pass some overdue water,
And nobody knew she was there.

The second one's name was old Mrs. Bickers.
She found a stray piece of wool at the Vicar's;
She pulled and she pulled and unravelled her
knickers,
And nobody knew she was there.

The third one's name was old Mrs. Humphrey.
She often went there, she thought it was comfy;
She suddenly found she could not get her bum free,
And nobody knew she was there.

The fourth one's name was old Mrs. Hewitt.
Goodness knows how long she'd waited to do it;
She rolled up her skirt and shouted, "Go to it!"
And nobody knew she was there.

The fifth one's name was old Mrs. Draper.
She sat there, she cut such a caper
Then suddenly shouted, "There's no bloody paper!"
And nobody knew she was there.

Collected from Yorkshire by way of British Columbia.

A TULAGI SONG

tune: The Girl I Left Behind Me

The liquor was spilled on the barroom floor
And Tulagi was closed for the night,
When out of his hole crept a little brown mouse
And sat on his haunches in the pale moonlight.

He lapped up the liquor on the barroom floor
And back on his haunches he sat;
For the rest of the night you could hear him roar,
"Bring on the God-damned cat."

Collected by Elaine Mullenax, Boulder, Colorado. K.

WOAD

tune: Men of Harlech

What's the use of wearing braces
Hats and spats and shoes with laces
Coats and vests you buy in places
Down on Brompton Road.

What's the use of shirts of cotton
Studs that always get forgotten
These affairs are simply rotten
Better far is woad.

Woad's the thing to show men
Woad to scare your foemen
Boil it to a brilliant blue and rub it on your back
and your abdomen.

Ancient Briton never hit on
Anything as good as woad to fit on
Necks and knees and where you sit on,
Tailors, you be blowed.

Romans come across the channel
All dressed up in tin and flannel
Half a pint of woad per man'll
Dress us more than these.

Saxon you can waste your stitches
Building beds for bugs in britches
We have woad to clothe us which is
Not a nest for fleas.

Roman keep your armour
Saxon your pajama
Hairy coats are made for goats, gorillas, yaks,
retriever dogs and llamas.

Tramp up Snowdon with your woad on
Never mind if we be rained or blowed on
Never need a button sewed on
Go it, ancient B's!

Collected from Laura Knipe, who learned it at Bryn Mawr. K.

28

STAY WITH GOD

The game was played on Sunday
In heaven's own back yard.
With Jesus playing fullback
And Moses playing guard.
And the angels in the bleachers
How they'd scream, how they'd yell,
When Jesus made a touchdown
And beat the boys from Hell.

Stay with God, stay with God;
Jesus on the one-yard line,
Moses doing mighty fine.
Stay with God, stay with God;
Rock 'em, sock 'em,
Jesus block 'em.
Stay with God.

Collected from Dick Smith, University of New Hampshire. K.

CHRISTIANITY HITS THE SPOT

tune: Pepsi-Cola

Christianity hits the spot,
Twelve apostles, that's a lot,
Holy Ghost and the Virgin too,
Absolution is the thing for you.
Holy, Holy, Holy!

Collected by Janis Benson Cripe, Beloit, Wisconsin.

GUTTER SONG

As I was walking down the street
As drunk as I could be,
I thought I spied a lamp-post
A-comin' straight at me.
I ducked to the side of it
And bumped into a tree,
So let that be a lesson, boys,
And never be like me.

Chorus: Halleluja, halleluja,
Put your nickel on the drum,
Save your soul, you drunken bum.
Halleluja, halleluja,
Put your nickel on the drum and be saved.

As I lay in the gutter
All guzzled up with beer,
With pretzels in my hair
I knew my end was near.
When along came a holy man
And saved me from the hearse.
So everybody strain a gut
And sing another verse.

Old Mrs. Johnson took in washing
All that she could scrub;
She busted many a button
Over the wash tub.
She wore her fingers down to stubs
And sometimes shed a tear
To buy her drunken husband
Another glass of beer.

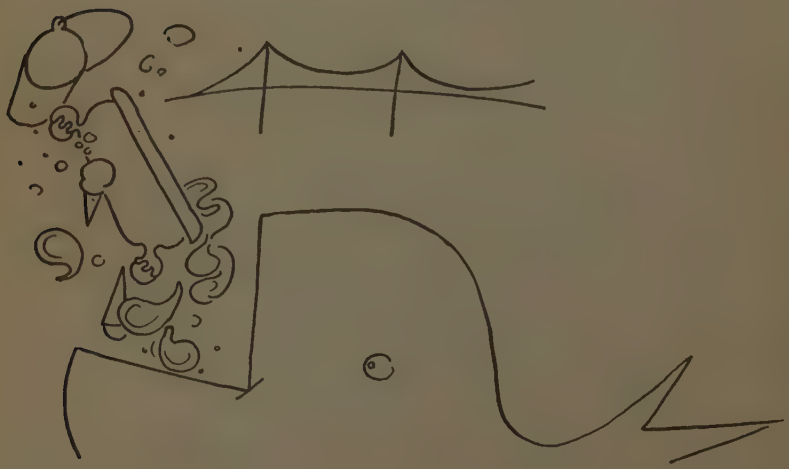
Collected from the Colorado Mountain Club Juniors.

30

THE FRISCO WHALE

tune: Dixie

In Frisco Bay there lives a whale,
They feed her porkchops by the pail,
By the pill-box, by the bathtub,
By the washtub, by the schooner.
Her name is Sarah, and she's a peach,
But don't leave food within her reach,
Or nursemaids, or babies,
Or chocolate ice-cream sodas.
She loves to eat, and when she smiles
You can just see teeth for miles and miles,
And spare ribs, and tonsils,
And things too fierce to mention.
Now what would you do in a case like that?
Now what would you do but step on your hat,
Or your mother, or your toothbrush,
Or anything else that's helpless?



MUSIC IN THE TEAPOT

tune: Bell-Bottom Trousers

Johnny was a chemist's son,
But Johnny is no more,
For what he thought was H_2O
Was H_2SO_4.

Chorus: There's music in the teapot,
There's music in the spout,
There's music in my mother-in-law,
But I can't get it out.

Little drops of sulfur
And $KClO_3$
Will add acceleration
To your velocity.

Down by the river the old man lived,
No cover for his bed,
So he took a sheet of water
And pulled it over his head.

Dr. Jones fell in the well,
But he should have known,
Doctors should attend the sick
And leave the well alone.

A butterfly has wings of gold,
The firefly wings of flame,
The bedbug has no wings at all
But he gets there just the same.

I want to see my Mary Jane
A pleasure I was seeking,
I missed her lips and kissed her nose,
But the gosh-darn thing was leaking.

Now Bill he kissed her on the cheek,
They thought it simple frolic.
But Bill was sick in bed next day;
They called it painter's colic.

She lived down by the sewer,
Down by the sewer she died,
And at the coroner's inquest
They called it sewer-side.

Mary had a little lamb;
She killed it very dead.
Now Mary takes the lamb to school
Between two slabs of bread.

Mary had a little dress
It was so light and airy,
It didn't show the dirt at all,
But my! how it showed Mary.

Mary had a little lamb,
Its feet were black as soot,
And everywhere that Mary went
His sooty foot he put.

THAT GOOD OLD MOUNTAIN DEW

Uncle Mort, he is sawed off and short,
He measures just four foot two,
But he thinks he's a giant if you give him a piant
Of that good old mountain dew.

Chorus: Oh they call it that good old mountain dew,
And them that refuse it are few.
Oh I'll shut up my mug
If you'll fill up my jug
With that good old mountain dew.

Aunt Maroon has some brand new perfume
It has such a sweet-smelling pew.
To her surprise when she had it analysed
It was nothing but good old mountain dew.

Uncle Bill has a still on the hill
Where he brews up a gallon or two.
Oh the birds in the sky get so high they can't fly
On that good old mountain dew.

There's an old hollow tree down the road there from me
Where you lay down a dollar or two,
And you go round the bend then you come back again
For that good old mountain dew.

Oh the preacher came by in his white shirt and tie
Said his wife she was down with the flu
And he thought that he ought just to give her a snort
Of that good old mountain dew.

The above three songs learned by Marion Kingston, Boulder, Colorado, 1955.

34

LITTLE WILLY

tune: Darling Nellie Gray

He has gone away and left us, our darling blue-haired boy,
And we'll never see our Willy any more.
For he died and went away on the ninety-third of May,
And he never died so suddenly before.

Chorus: No more upon the mat will Willy tease the cat,
No more between his teeth he'll bite her tail.
No more against the red-hot stove her dainty nose he'll press,
For our darling little Willy's kicked the pail.

Oh we filled him up with glue and we tried to bring him to,
But we only brought him eight or nine or more.
We stood him on the chair but he didn't like it there,
So he stood right up and died upon the floor.

We could tell that he was dying by the color of his breath,
We could see the blossom nipping in the bud.
And the doctor said the only way to save our darling child
Was to stop the circulation of his blood.

We soaked his little hand in a bucket of hot sand
But all our little efforts were in vain.
We laid him on his side where he blew his nose and died,
Then he stood up, blew his nose, and died again.

Collected by E. M. Collins, Houston, Texas, 1952. K.

MY CROSS-EYED GAL

Oh, she done gone away, kicked the bucket yesterday,
My cross-eyed gal who lives upon the hill.
She said goodbye to me as I held her on my knee,
And said we'd meet at the golden shore.
But I took it as a joke, never thought that she would croak,
'Cause she never died so suddenly before.

Oh, I'll fill her last request as we lay her here to rest,
And plant a bunch of onions on her grave,
So that when I'm passing by I can pucker up and cry,
'Cause the whole darn thing just simply makes me rave.

We suspected her demise from the color of her eyes,
But our efforts to revive her were in vain.
She looked up at me and smiled then turned up her nose and died
Then looked up and sneezed and smiled and died again.

Oh, she done gone away, kicked the bucket yesterday,
My cross-eyed gal who lives upon the hill.
She said goodbye to me as I held her on my knee,
And I never seen my cross-eyed gal amore.

Collected by Elaine Mullenax from Bob Fulton, a Colorado boy who learned it from a Coast Guard buddy from Tennessee. K.

36

THE TROOPER AND THE MAID

A trooper lad cam' ower thon lea,
O ridin' he was weary.
A trooper lad cam' here last nicht
An' the mune was shinin' clearly.

Chorus: Bonnie lassie I'll lie near ye yet,
Bonnie lassie I'll lie near ye—
An' I'll gar a' your ribbons reel
In the mornin' or I leave ye.

She's taen his horse by the bridle rein
And led him til the stable
She's treated him to corn an' hay,
As muckle as he was able.

She's taen the trooper by the hand
And she's led him til her chamber.
She's treated him to breid an' wine,
An' the wine it bein' like amber.

She's made the bed baith lang an' wide,
She's shaped it like a lady.
She's kilted up her petticoats,
Says, Trooper are ye ready?

They hadnae been in bed an oor,
An oor but scarce the quarter,
When the drums cam beatin' up the street
An' ilka beat grew sharper.

'Ts will ye no come back again,
Will ye no come back an' see me?
When heather grows on yonder knowes
It's I'll come back an' see ye.

She's kilted her wee coaties tae her knees
An' she's followed him doon tae Stirlin.
But she's grown sae fou that she cuidna bou
An' he's left her in Dunfermline.

Chorus: Bonnie lassie I'll lie near ye yet
Bonnie lassie I'll lie near ye—
An' I'll gar a' your ribbons reel
In the mornin' or I leave ye.

Child ballad 299. Collected in Turriff, Aberdeenshire, in 1952.

LAMENT

'S muladach 's muladach tha mi.

Chorus: Hi ri liu horo e ho ra
Liu hi ri le ho ra ilu oro.
Direadh na beinne is ga tearnadh
'G iarraidh nan each 's nach mi 'n t-aitear
'G iarraidh a chruidh 's nach mi 'n t-aireach
Ge goirt leam sud cha'n e chraidh mi.

Ach a luchd a dh'oirt am bata
Bha m'athair oirre 's mo thruir bhrathrain
Leannan ciunn beul a mhanrain
Beul a mhire 's a chiul ghaire
Chaidh ghearan thu nochd air m'anradh
Ged shuidhinn air tulchan laimh riut.

Translation:

Sad and sorrowful am I
ascending the mountain and descending it,
seeking the horses and I not the grieve,
seeking the cattle and I not the herd.
Although that pains me it is not what has tortured me
but the cargo that the boat spilt;
my father was in her and my three brothers,
(and) the gentle lover, mouth of melodious conversation,
mouth of merriment and laughter;
you do not complain of my distress tonight,
even though I should sit on a hummock beside you.

Collected in 1950 by James Ross from Duncan Beaton, Uig, Skye, who died in the autumn of 1954.

The two songs above were secured for this issue by Tom Schaefer, Beloit, Wisconsin, from Stewart F. Sanderson, Secretary-Archivist of the School of Scottish Studies, Edinburgh.

Table of Contents

Tarpen and Toad 1
Little Hobby Horse 1
Uncle Jakes 2
Fudge, Fudge 2
The Pumpkin Song 3
William A-Trembletoe 4
The Purple Hen 4
Heigh-ho Silver 5
Grasshopper Song 6
The Old Woman 7
Snake Baked a Hoecake 8
Old Molly Hare 8
Lonely Woodpecker 8
Do, Mama, Do 9
Mouse Went A-Courtin' 10
The Prune Song 12
As I Be Did 13
Paper of Pins 13
I Came to a River 15
Gunk Gunk 15
Three Men They Went A-Hunting 16
The Insult 18
True Blue Bill 19
Tyin' knots in the Devil's Tail 20
When the Old Boss Dies 22
Cowboy Lullaby 23
Sally Good'un 24
Five Old Ladies 24
A Tulagi Song 26
Woad 26
Stay with God 28
Christianity Hits the Spot 28
Gutter Song 29
The Frisco Whale 30
Music in the Teapot 31
That Good Old Mountain Dew 33
Little Willy 34
My Cross-Eyed Gal 35
The Trooper and the Maid 36
Lament 37

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